



## Spring News from the Sweet Pea Foundation

It has been 15 months since the WHO declared Covid-19 a pandemic. In that time, remarkable progress has been made in understanding the highly infectious disease that stopped the world. We need to thank all the scientists, researchers, doctors, nurses, and the companies that have been dedicated to working on treatments and vaccines to prevent the spread of the virus. In just nine short months, the FDA issued the first emergency use authorization for a vaccine for the prevention of the Coronavirus disease.

This is a remarkable achievement!

Remarkable achievements like this are happening all the time in the field of medicine and we need to thank God for medical progress that saves or improves the lives of those afflicted.

Like the medical breakthrough for Covid 19, there are treatments today for Spinal Muscular Atrophy, SMA for short, that took Graces' life.

Many don't know that SMA is a genetic disorder that starts in the central nervous system and affects all the muscles in the body. It's caused by a lack of spinal motor neuron proteins that are key in muscle development and movement. Due to the degenerative nature of the disease, people with SMA will experience a decline in muscle strength over time. The rate and severity differs among individuals and in Grace's case, she had the most severe subtype—Type 1, early-onset SMA.

Over 18 years ago, when Grace was born, there were no treatments available. Now, parents have options to help their children diagnosed with SMA. We appreciate all the professionals dedicated to studying genetic diseases of all kinds. They are truly creating life changing and remarkable results that offers hope for those who are affected.

Thank you for supporting the Sweet Pea Foundation. It is because of Grace, our little Sweet Pea, that we started this Foundation and made it our mission to help sick children and their families!

In peace and love,

*Pete and Suzanne Letherman*



## sweet pea foundation Annual Kickoff Classic!

### Sealed-Bid Football Auction Winner!

The Sweet Pea Foundation would like to thank everyone who submitted bids for the personalized, autographed football signed by current head football coach Brian Kelly. The highest bid was from Mike O'Malley in Houston, Texas. Thank you Mike for your support of the Sweet Pea Foundation!



### Something to Note: Liam Franz was Inspired by Sweet Pea!

In the summer of 2019, we had the opportunity to present at Notre Dame to a group of college students enrolled in a two-week Summer Scholars class called "Marketing for the Common Good." Recently we found out that student, Liam Franz, who listened to our presentation, started his own non-profit organization. Liam said, "We worked with a nonprofit in South Bend called the Sweet Pea Foundation, who worked with newborns who are having medical issues. That kind of pulled at my heart and made me realize there's a big issue out there with children in hospitals. There's a lot of help there, but there can always be more help." Kudos to Liam for his efforts to help sick children!



sweet pea foundation  
from a little grace grows a world of love



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## Spring Newsletter

2021

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*Grace Elizabeth Letherman,  
our inspiration!*





# Here is a brief overview of the latest developments of the Sweet Pea Foundation:



## Kickoff Classic Golf Outing Returns!

The Kickoff Classic golf outing is back! After holding a virtual outing last September, the Foundation will hold its 18th annual golf outing on **Friday, September 10, 2021**, the eve of the Notre Dame vs. Toledo home football game. The Kickoff Classic is an annual charity event to benefit the Sweet Pea Foundation. The golf outing will take place at Juday Creek Golf Course in Granger, Indiana. The cost to golf is \$90.00 per golfer and it includes 18 holes of golf, a cart, beverages, lunch and a ticket for the chance to win a door prize! The outing is played in a scramble format with a shotgun start. Plan on gathering for lunch at Wing's Etc. in Mishawaka, IN for lunch after the outing. Golfers can register individually or sign up as a foursome.



2019 Kickoff Classic Winners Corey Betzer, Jeff Boetticher, Pete Byrne and Chris Cooper.

If you are interested in sponsoring a prize, hole, food, beverages or the event, please email the Foundation at [sweetpeafoundation@comcast.net](mailto:sweetpeafoundation@comcast.net). There are also sponsorship and golf registration forms on the website at [sweetpeafoundation.org](http://sweetpeafoundation.org).

Whose names will be engraved on the coveted Rob Letherman Memorial Sweet Pea Cup?



## Make Your Donations Online!

The Sweet Pea Foundation now accepts donations online via credit card or PayPal. The donation button on the Sweet Pea Foundation website at [sweetpeafoundation.org](http://sweetpeafoundation.org) or the QR code below, will take you to a secure PayPal screen where you can simply enter your gift amount and select if you want to pay by credit card or PayPal if you have a PayPal account. Please know that the Foundation still accepts donations by check and they can be mailed to the address on the back of this newsletter.



Scan this QR code to make an online donation to the Sweet Pea Foundation!



Since the pandemic began, more and more people have turned to shopping online. If you fall in that group, there is an easy way you can help support the Sweet Pea Foundation! Amazon gives back to charities with eligible purchases. Please search for the Sweet Pea Foundation as your charity to support when you make purchases at Amazon! It's easy to sign up! Go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) on any kind of device and select the Get Started button. Or, download the Amazon App for your phone. If you already have the app, you will need to update it with the latest version before it will work!

To begin, open the app and sign up the Sweet Pea Foundation located in Granger, IN as your favorite charity. First, select the Main Menu (☰). Go to Settings and tap on AmazonSmile and follow the instructions to select your charity and activate/turn on AmazonSmile on your phone. Thereafter, each time you shop, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of each eligible smile.amazon.com item. Tens of millions of products are eligible. You can see if the item you are purchasing is eligible on its product detail page. The Foundation has received \$475.68 to date. All US charities have received \$266 million. With your help, we can increase that figure for the Sweet Pea Foundation. Thank you!

## Sweet Pea Replaces Refrigerators!



In the fall of 2020, the Sweet Pea Foundation replaced the 20 mini-refrigerators that we had donated to Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Michiana. Many of the refrigerators were not working properly. Nancy Salwin, Community Engagement and Event Specialist, said, "You have no

idea the impact these refrigerators are having with the restricted movement of families in the hospital [due to Covid]. Families can only come and go once a day so a mom can pump several times and have plenty of room for all of the milk, and there is peace of mind that the temperature is accurate with the digital display. Thank you so much for doing this for our families, it is very much appreciated. When a child is sick, the greatest gift we can give is the love and strength of family."

"Thank you so much for the wonderful Valentine's Day-themed "Hugs from Grace" bags. I had so much fun passing them out. One 9-year-old girl just grinned from ear to ear and she literally hugged each book as she pulled them out of the bag! I had an 11-year-old boy who thought that the brain teasers would be a good challenge and he let me know that he was up to it! Another 9-year-old girl was just thrilled with her bag and kept asking me if it was all for her to keep. A 6-year-old girl who got her bag today was also thrilled, she would gasp each time she pulled something out of the bag and in a dramatic fashion would show her mom. Thank you for always taking the time to assemble and deliver the bags to us, we really appreciate it."

—Tracy Byler, CCLS  
Child Life/Creative Therapies  
Beacon Children's Hospital



The contents of a Valentine's Day Hug donated by the Sweet Pea Foundation.